

Cholera infantum

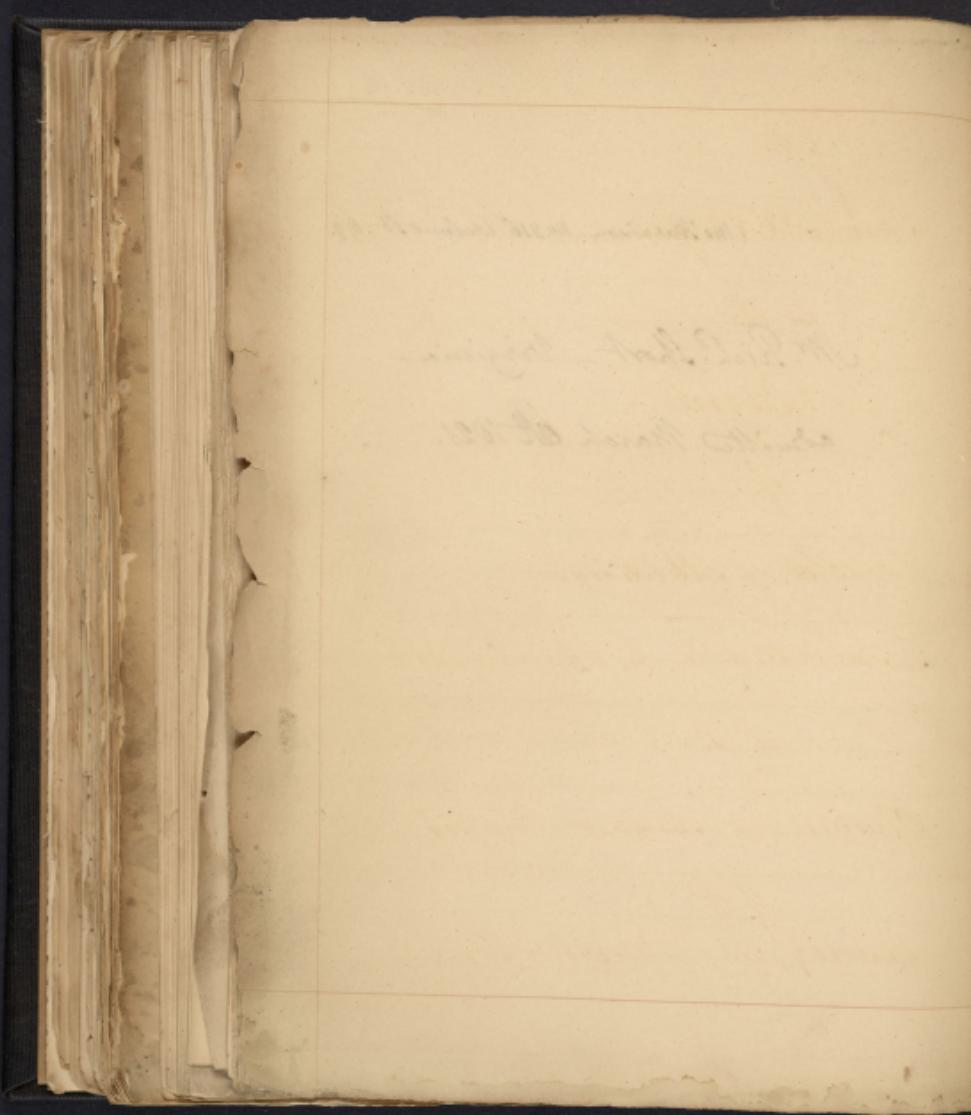
Apr. 23d.

No. 10

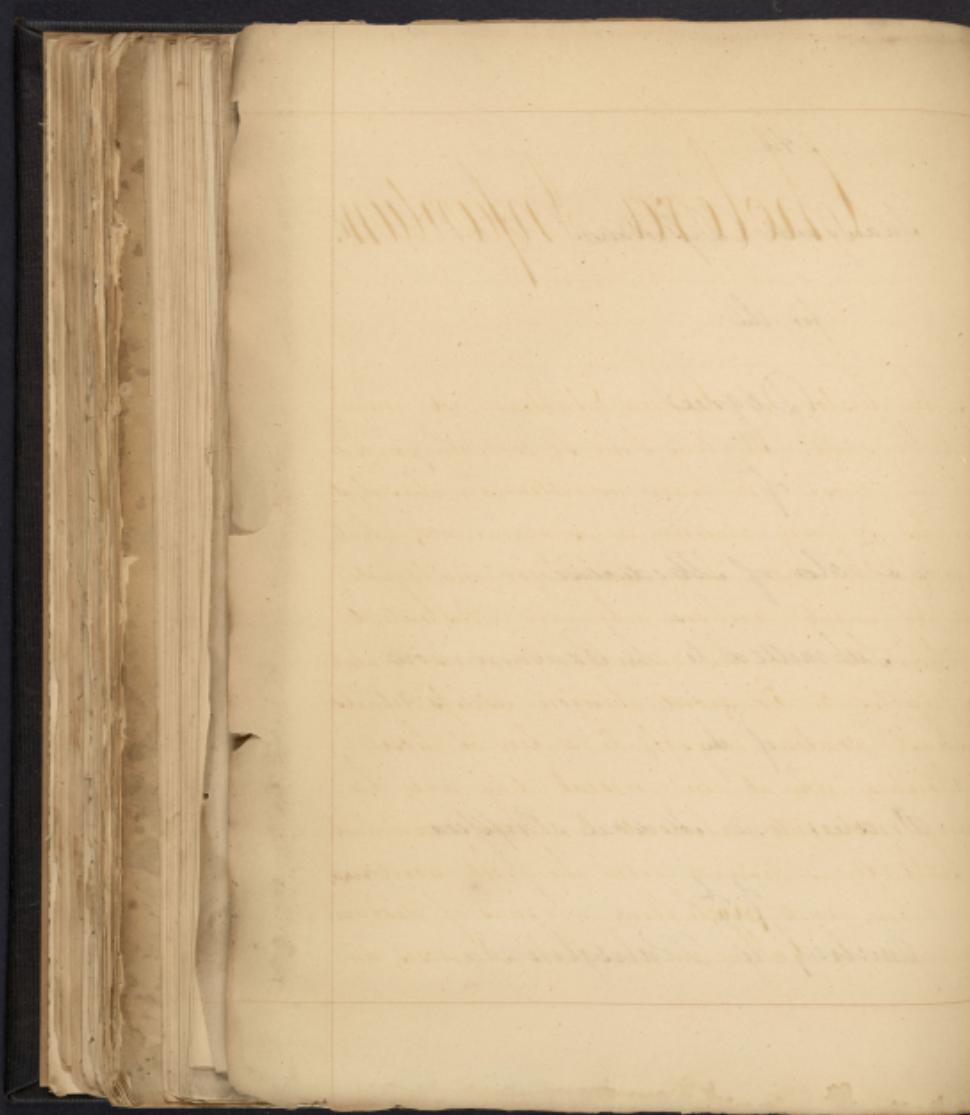
Mrs. Garrison No. 216 Walnut St. 89.

Mr. Rich[?]. Short - Virginia -

admitted March 6th 1821.



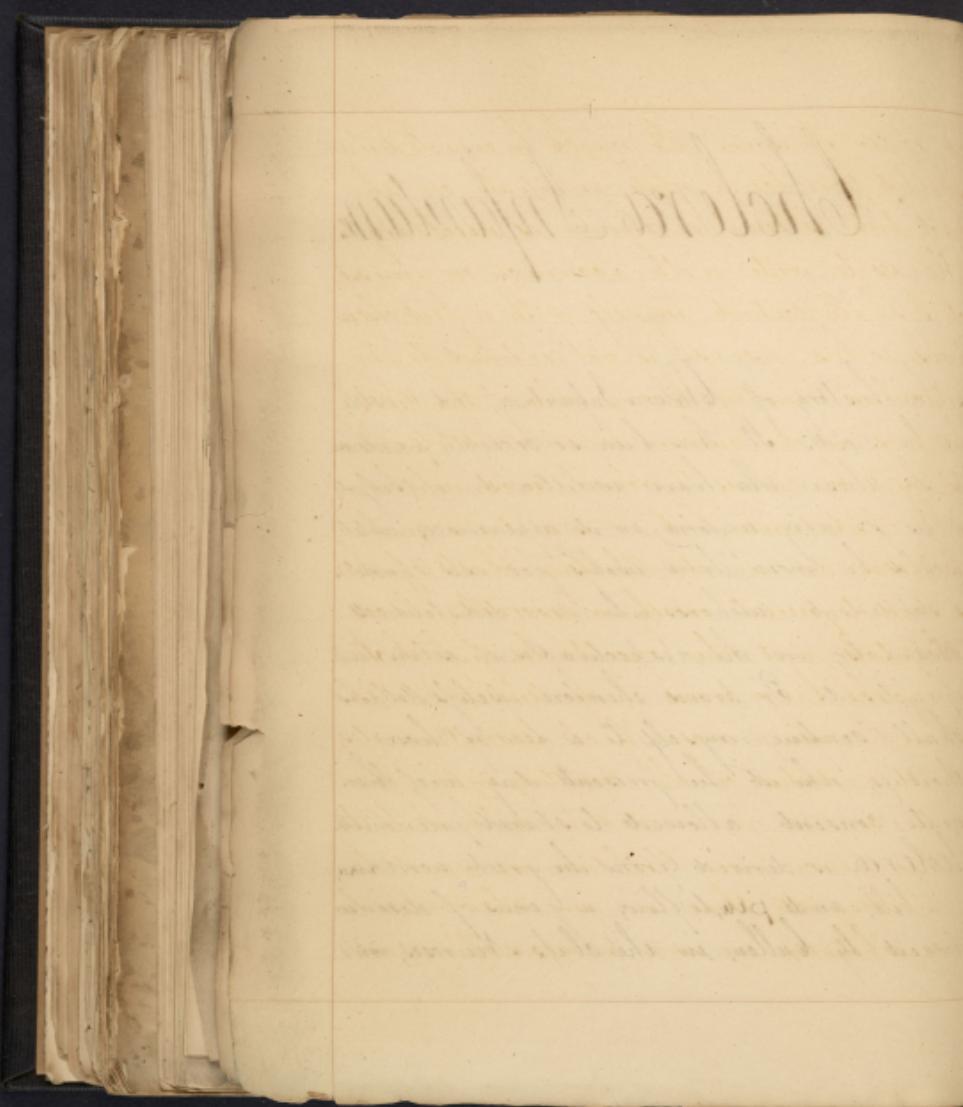
An
Inaugural Dissertation
for the
Degree
of
Doctor of Medicine
Submitted to the Examination
of the
Trustees and Medical Professors
of the
University of Pennsylvania.



Cholera Infantum.

Of the history of Cholera Infantum, not much need be said: It has been so correctly pointed out by those who have written on the subject, and is so very uniform in its appearance, that it would be more than would be necessary to quote the different authors who have illustrated its character in the respective Countries in which they practised. To avoid therefore useless details I shall confine myself to a few of those Authorities, who at the present day are, by general consent allowed to stand preeminent.

Cholera is derived from the greek word *χολη*, bile, and *πνεύμων*, a genus of disease arranged by Cullen, in the class *Neuroses*, and

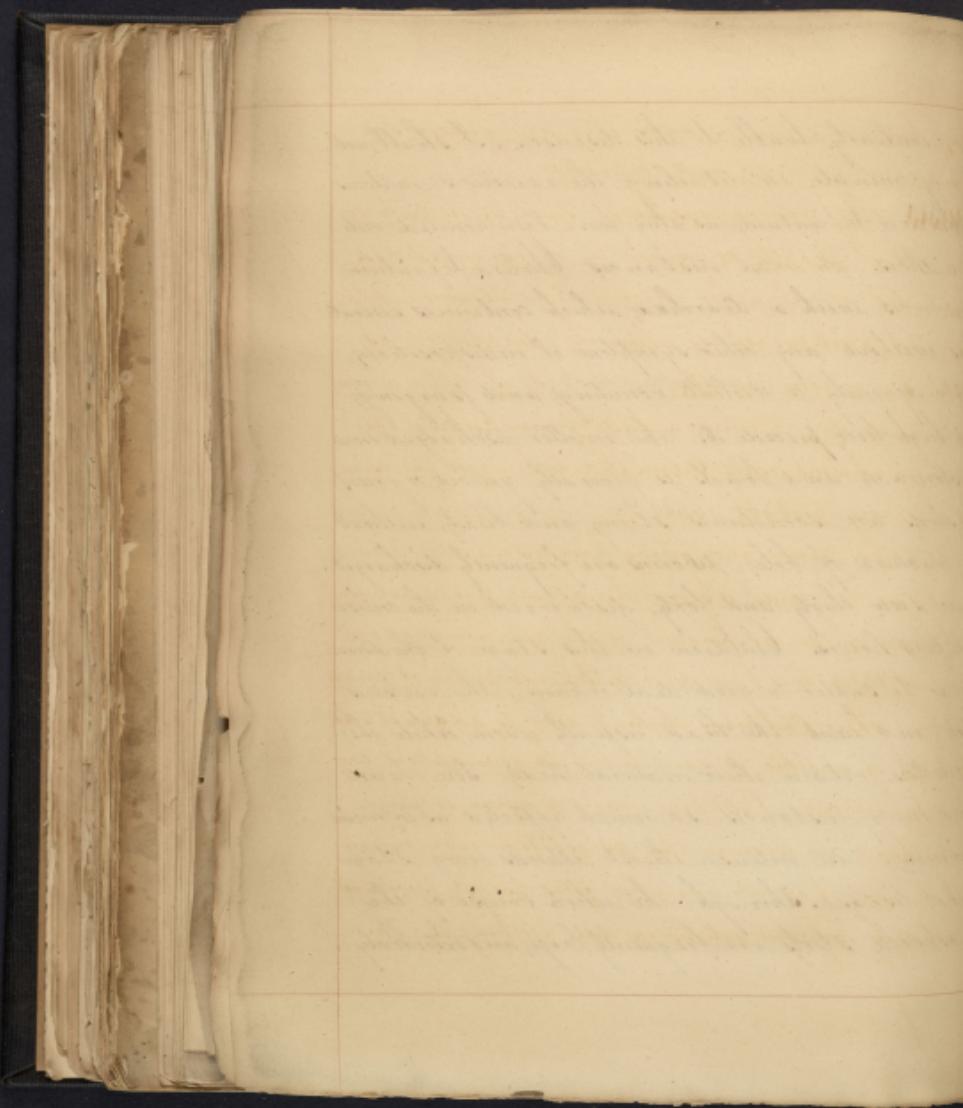


2

and order Spasmo. It might be expected that
I should here for a while expatiate on the
subject, but as long experience is necessary to
enable us to write with accuracy on any sub-
ject, I shall content myself with a few obser-
vations. This disease is not confined to any
particular Country: Every part of the West
Globe has on the contrary experienced its ravage.
It is said by Authors to prevail most in the
months of Autumn: but we sometimes meet
with cases during the Chilling blasts of winter.
It is said to prevail mostly in crowded places
as Hospitals, and other receptacles of filth, In
most of the large towns of the United States.
It is a disease principally of warm climates,
and its partakes of the Remitting type of fever.
This disease is aggravated by the heat of the
weather, hence more Children are said to
die in August, than in any other month.
Children between one and two years of age, are

3

are peculiarly liable to this disease. I shall not be very minute in detailing the various symptoms of Cholera Infantum, as they have been pointed out by authors. In most instances Cholera Infantum commences with a diarrhoea, which continues several days without any other symptom of indisposition, but frequently a violent vomiting, and purging; and high fever precedes it. The matter discharged from the stomach and bowels is generally yellow, or green, the stools are sometimes slimy and bloody, without any tincture of bile; worms are frequently discharged. I have seen thirty and forty, discharged in the course of a few hours. Children in this stage of the disease appear to suffer a good deal of pain, the pulse is quick and weak. The head usually warm, while the extremities retain their natural heat. The head is in many instances so much affected as to produce delirium. An intense thirst attends every stage of the disease. Through the whole course of the disease the stools are frequently large, and extremely



fetid, but in some instances they are without smell
and resemble dints, and ulcers only.

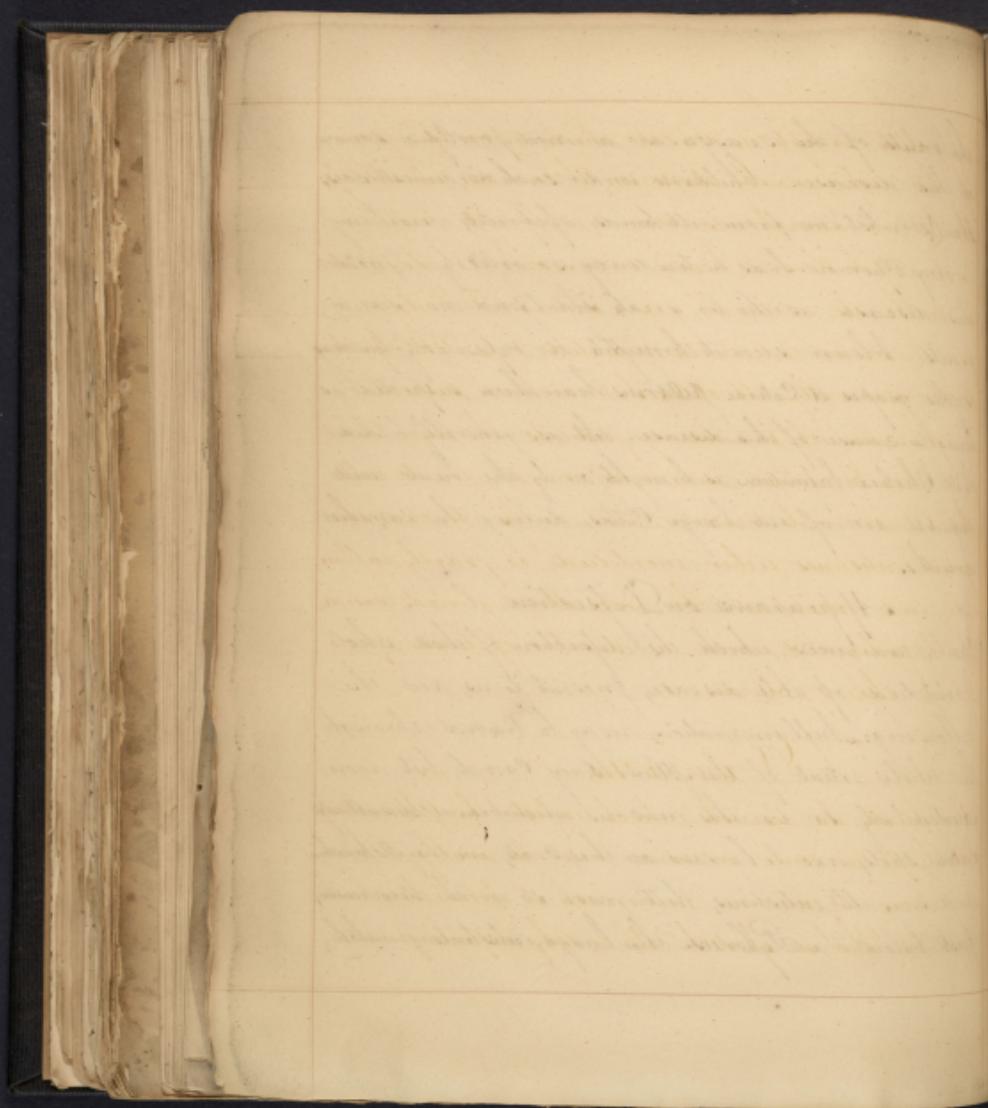
Cause. there are various being, such as induce de-
bility either directly, or indirectly, of the intestines.
Visitudes of weather alternating from heat to
Cold, and particularly so when the Atmosphere is
moist. In warm climates and seasons, after extreme-
ly hot and dry weather a fall of rain cooling the
Atmosphere seems well calculated to bring on this disease;
and it is very probable that ... it is very liable. An
obstructed perspiration may have also a share in
this, thic we frequently observe the disease to appear when
no change in the temperature of the air nor any applica-
tion of Cold has been observed. The inattention of parents
to change their Childrens Clothing, and to adapt it to the
Visitudes of weather is said to lay the foundation for
Cholera Infantis. Distillation may act as an exciting
cause; hence we perceive this disease to be more violent
at that age than at any other. This disease is brought
into action by improper articles in diet, Clothing &c. The

1160

the fruits of the season are a most prolific source
of this disease. Children under such circumstances
should abstain from all kinds of fruit, nothing
in my opinion has a tendency so readily to produce
this disease as the too great indulgence in sweet
fruits. I have seen it brought on repeatedly by eating
Apples, grapes &c Celeri. Worms have been suspected as
being a cause of this disease. It is generally believed
that Cholera infantum, is brought on by the heat and
impure air of our large Cities, during the summer
months.

Appearance on Dissection.

The appearances which the dissection of those who
have died of this disease, present to us, are the
following: Inflammation, may be traced through
the whole extent of the Intestinal Canal, but more
particularly so in the mucous membrane, dark red
livid spots, are to be seen on this Coat, in the Stomach,
and small intestines, but more so in the descending
just below the Pylorus. the large intestines much



affected except in cases which go on to Dysentery
in this we frequently discover ulcerations, and though
the Liver is sometimes very much affected, in
protracted cases being occasionally enlarged
to double its natural size. The Gall Bladder is
usually distended with vitiated bile. The Pancreas
is occasionally affected. I have had several
opportunities of examining patients who have died
of Cholera Infantum, and have generally found all
the Abdominal viscera more or less affected, the
great intestines either mortified, or partly inflam-
ed and mortified. The mesenteric glands consider-
ably enlarged, and a number of livid spots
about the rectum.

Diagnosis.

Almost all the diseases which infest the alimentary canal do in some measure bear an analogy to Cholera Infantum, & we can distinguish them with facility. This we shall be able to do by inspecting the

?

the evacuations. It may be distinguished from the Dysentery by the nature of the discharges, by nothing attended with Torment, and Fever may, in the course of the disease, be present. I shall not go on to mention the tedious rule by which it may be distinguished from the other diseases of a similar nature, as it would require more time than I am disposed to allow. I shall therefore proceed to speak of the

Pronosis.

This may be favourable in all mild attacks and even in more violent ones a hope may justly be indulged, if we subdue the fever in a short time; but if not, melancholic consequences are liable to ensue. Abcymopathy forms as I have witnessed several times. Vertigo, syncope, in an erect posture great loss of muscular power, and considerable irritability of the stomach, a small quick intermitting pulse, subcutaneous tumours these are unfavourable and indicate great danger. A recovery may be expected when the above enumerated symptoms are not so violent.

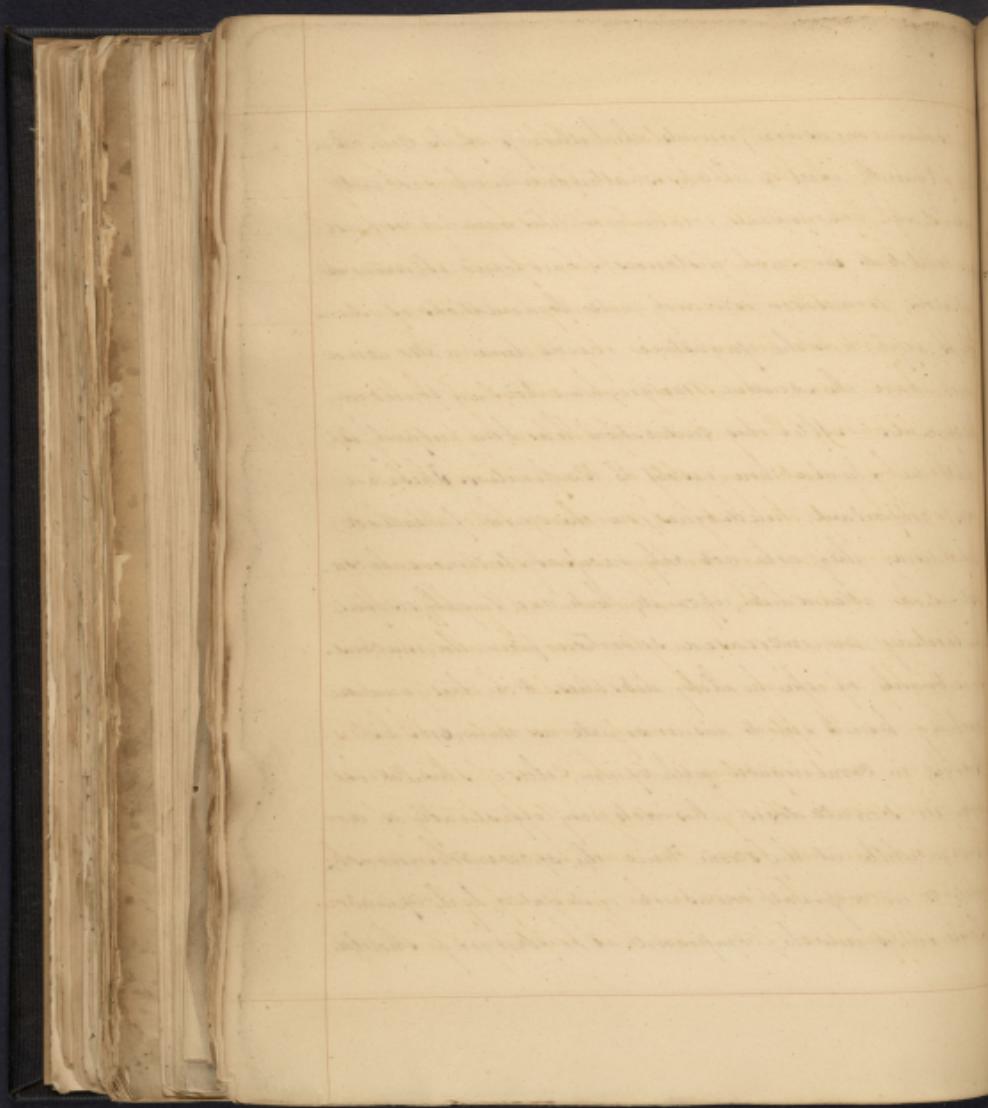
Methods of Cure.

As to the treatment of Cholera infantum, no little diversity of opinion has existed among our best physicians. Now this discordance of opinion took its rise can only be accounted for from the different modifications of the disease, the climate in which it exists or from the peculiar situation in which patients are often located. All these circumstances might at one time or other have been either favourable or unfavourable for the patient. This in my opinion is one of the most potent reasons of such a multiplicity of sentiments concerning the true method not only of curing this but of every other disease common to mankind. and this is the cause why that harmony of sentiment cannot exist among physicians as well as among other professional characters. It would be tedious for me therefore to mention all the opinions which have been offered before the public as the result of long and correct experience. I shall confine myself to those which best accord with my own. The first step towards the cure of

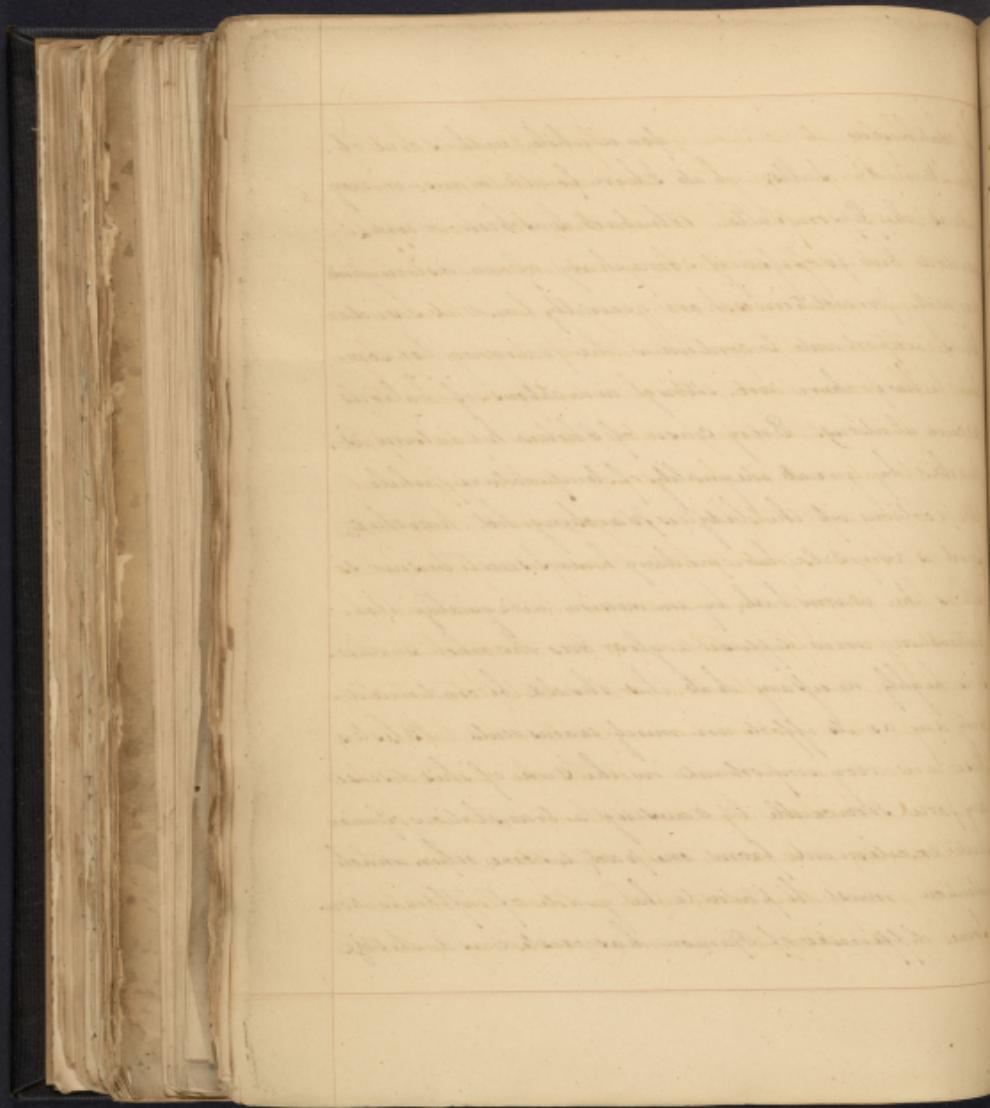
of this troublesome disease depends on many circumstances
but in the first place the remedies to be used must be
in proportion to the violence of the disease, and we should
not neglect to keep in view the climate in which the
disease exists, the time of the year, the strength of the
patient, all these will assist in making up our minds
relative to the true methods of cure. If in the first place
there is much inflammation which is very generally the
case nothing is so well calculated to subdue it as rhubarb
but in many instances it commences with a disordered
state of the Alimentary Canal in such cases cathartics
also undearous should be directed to its evacuation
but as regards the precise course to be pursued to effect
this purpose, there is by no means the same unanimity
of sentiment; Castor Oil generally preferred for this purpose,
no doubt in very mild cases this would answer very
well, it passes readily through the intestines and
occasions little or no griping; the only difficulty is in
getting children to take it, The best way therefore of
giving it is in combination with a little sugar as this

10

in some measure prevents the bitterness of the Oil. But we frequently meet with cases attended with violent vomiting; the patients vomiting up the medicine as fast as exhibited. In such instances I have found the Anodyne infusions, to answer extremely well, formulations of warm cloths, applied to the epigastric region, lime water and milky, and the scutellæ Mixture, have all been found very beneficial. After this indication has been properly fulfiled we should then resort to Castor oil. These are most important medicines, in the cure of Cholera Infantum; they are not only necessary to remove the constipation attendant upon it, but are highly useful by exciting an increased secretion from the mucous membrane of the healthy intestines. For this purpose nothing has I seen to answer so well as the mineral purgative, in combination with Opium; these should be given in small doses, this acts very effectually as a purge while at the same time the spasmodic unassuages & in a great measure mitigated by the Opium which enters into the compound. The purging should

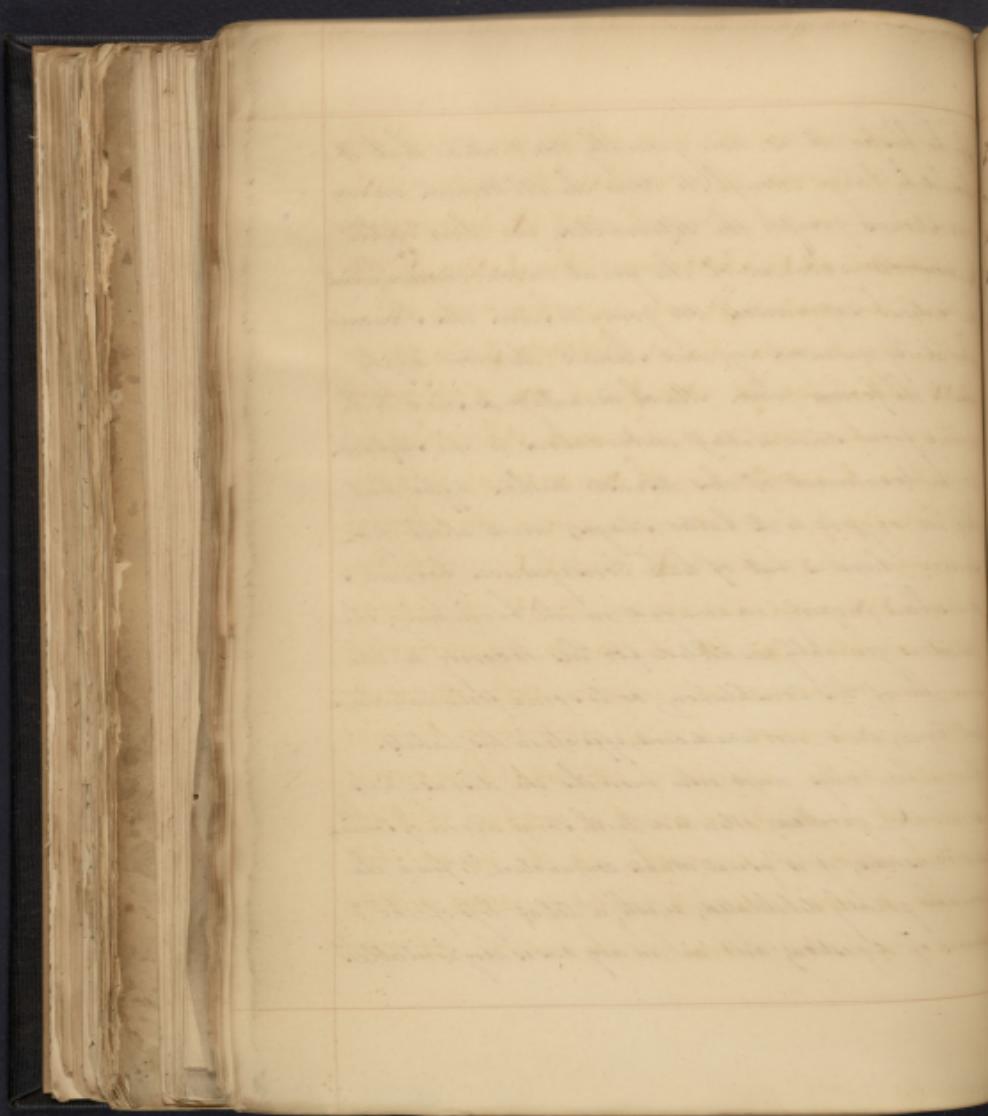


be continued sometimes for a while, such some of
the Neutral Salts; what I have found to answer very
well is the Epsom Salts. Rhubarb has been recom-
mended but (possessing something of an astringent
property) practitioners have generally laid it aside.
It is important to continue the purging for some
time, where there are strong indications of bilious
accumulations. Every case of Phlegmata hystericum is
marked by great inequality of temperature, while
one portion of the body is parching hot, another
part is very cold, here nothing has I seen to answer so
well as the warm bath, by immersion we equalize the
temperature, and diffuse a glow over the whole surface.
It is highly necessary that this should be continued
very day as its effects are many evanescent. Besides
these are very important in the cure of this disease
they prove serviceable by causing a translation of mor-
bid excretion from one part to some other much
attention must be paid to the grade of inflammation.
Some differences of opinion has existed as to the size



of the bladder, it is now generally conceded that it should be large enough to cover the Abdomen. many practitioners prefer the extirpation, for their application on account of the great inconvenience which the patient experiences on going to stool. This I conceive to be totally unnecessary, and should therefore apply them to the former part. Much advantage is said to be derived from stimulating emulsions to the surface. In the treatment of this disease authors differ but little in regard to its latter stages; and their difference there is but of little consequence, so unless it has been properly managed in the beginning, the patient is generally indebted for his recovery to the strength of his Constitution, or to some fortunate change that time, and not medicine, effects in his habits.

After a few days, and even months the disease passes into a diarrhoea, attended with some degree of vomiting and flatulence; it is usual at this conjuncture, to find the stomach greatly debilitated, with a total loss of the powers of digestion, and in many cases very irritable.

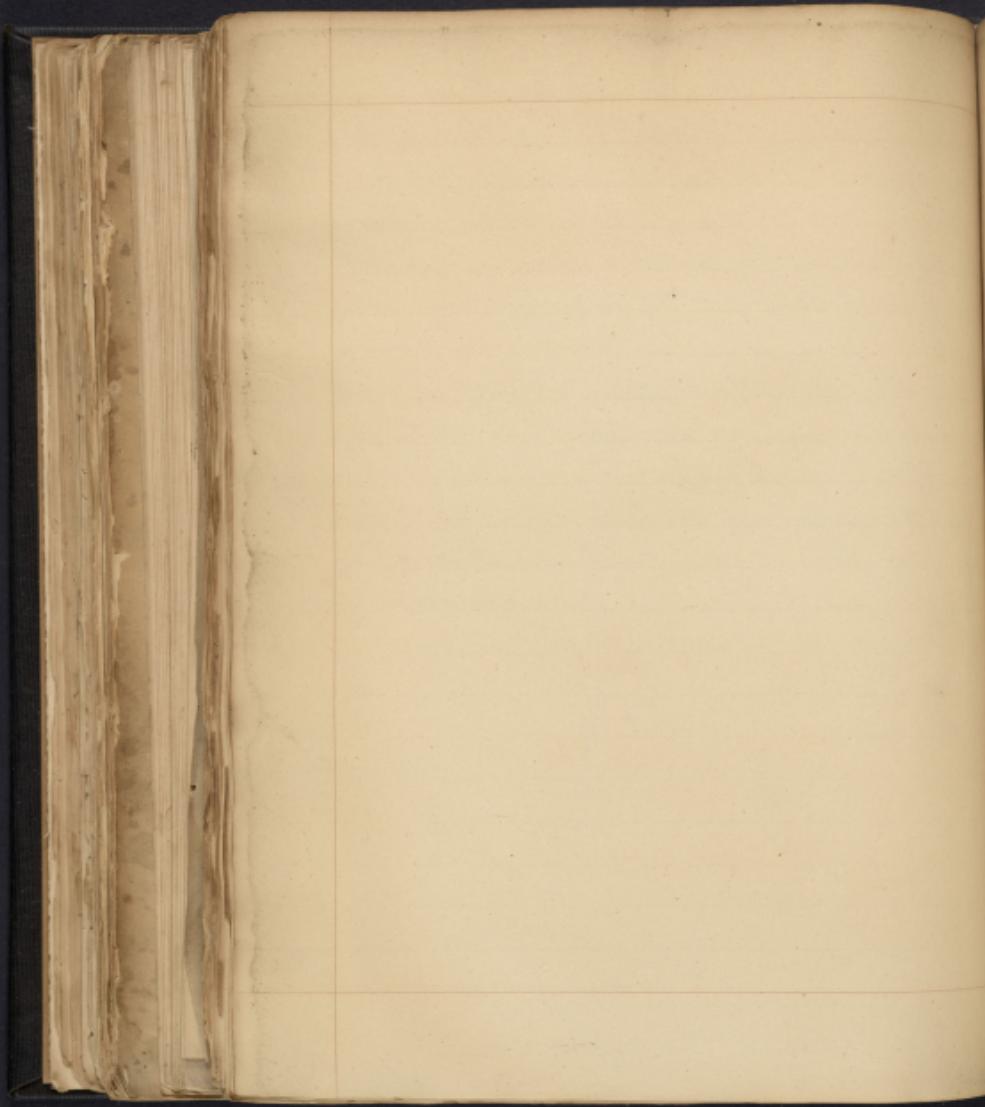


The remedies at this stage of the disease are the Alka-
litic and Oestaceous preparations. The following I
have seen to answer extremely well R. Soda prepared
of Limestone $\frac{ij}{ij}$ & v. Saccharum Album $\frac{ij}{ij}$ Aqua $\frac{ij}{ij}$ M.
the dose of this mixture $\frac{ij}{ij}$ every two or three hours the
Alkalies may be used thus R. Sals. Tartar $\frac{ij}{ij}$ Laudanum
 $\frac{ij}{ij}$ XV white Sugar $\frac{ij}{ij}$ Water $\frac{ij}{ij}$. the dose of this mixture
a Table Spoonfull every two or three hours Rhubarb may
at this time be resorted to with considerable advantage
the following preparation is very much used here it is derived
by adapting to the Complaint R. Rhubarb X grains Calamus
Magnesia XXX grains Laudanum $\frac{ij}{ij}$ Oil of Anise
 $\frac{ij}{ij}$ iii or iv Water $\frac{ij}{ij}$ M. the dose $\frac{ij}{ij}$ every two or three
hours these preparations are particularly calculated to relieve
the Torment of Hernias, which are apt to occur. Enemas
of melted butter deprived of its salt I have seen
used with great advantage it is necessary that this
should be used pretty copiously. As the disease still
progresses it loses most of its painful symptoms, and then
comes a simple diarrhoea here the mineral astringents

Come in with advantage. among the best of them is
Alum this is generally given in combination with little
Opium two or three grains of Alum with one with
of a grain of Opium. The Vegetable Astringents have also
been tried, and with various success, Columb. They
should be used in form of powder, but the remedy
which I have seen to answer extremely well and in my
Opinion should be preferred to all the other Vegetables
Astringents is the common Black berry root, this should
be given in the form of decoction. It should be boiled
in Vinegar and sweetened with loaf sugar. this I have
seen used again and again with unequalled
utility.— It remains for me to say a few words re-
pecting the proper regimen. In the mild varieties
of this disease there is no necessity for a very strict
regimen, but in the inflammatory cases the patient
should abstain from all substances of a stimulating
nature, such as wine, Porter, Ale, &c. The diet should
consist of the farinaceous preparations such as
Rice, Sage, Tapioca, — After all the ordinary

remedy, is a change of Climate or air: so long as the Child remains in the City and is exposed to the operation of those causes which produce the disease, we may palliate, but hardly ever effect a permanent cure. In such a case a Country residence is preferable. To prevent a disease so fatal in its occurrence, becomes a high duty, for the accomplishment of which the following rules are necessary. The Child should never remain under twelve months, where a predisposition exists to Cholera infantum; until we should employ the Cold bath. The Child should wear flannel. It is necessary that the gums of the Child be scarcely & occasionally.





Copyist's book

Entered Jan 27th 1821

Philadelphia

